WEIRD WORLDS

JUNE
1971
50¢

SPECIAL BONUS
SPACE ROT
A SCIENCE FICTION NOVELETTE

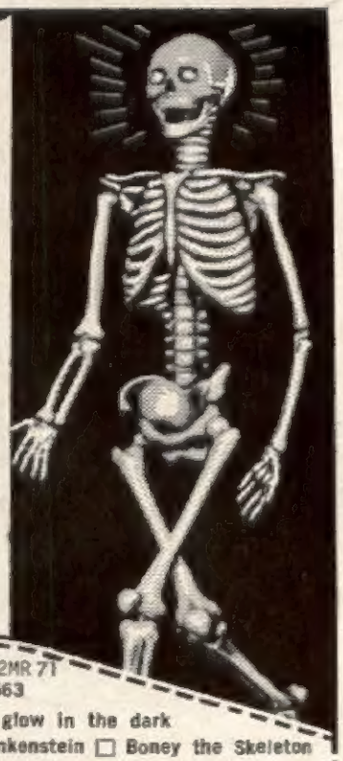
FEATURING:

FUTURISTIC HORROR WITH
THE METAL REPLACEMENTS

WILD, WEIRD, SHOCK ON THE
EVIL TRIP

SPACE TERROR WITH
CHAIN REACTION

MONSTER S-I-Z-E MONSTERS



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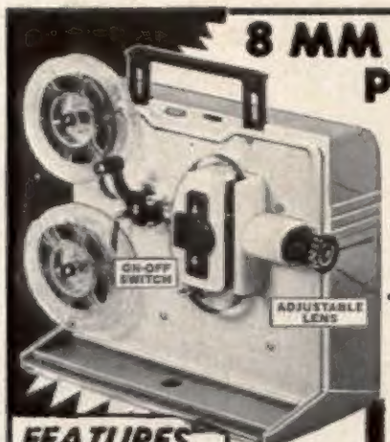

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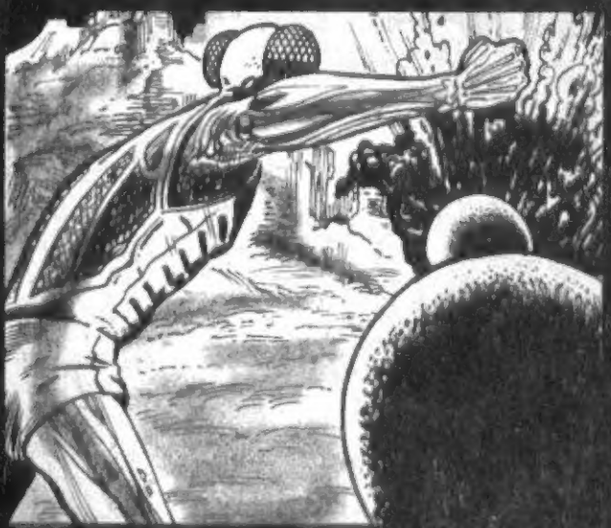

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CARL BURGOS, Editor IRVING FASS, Art Director
EZRA JACKSON, Art Editor

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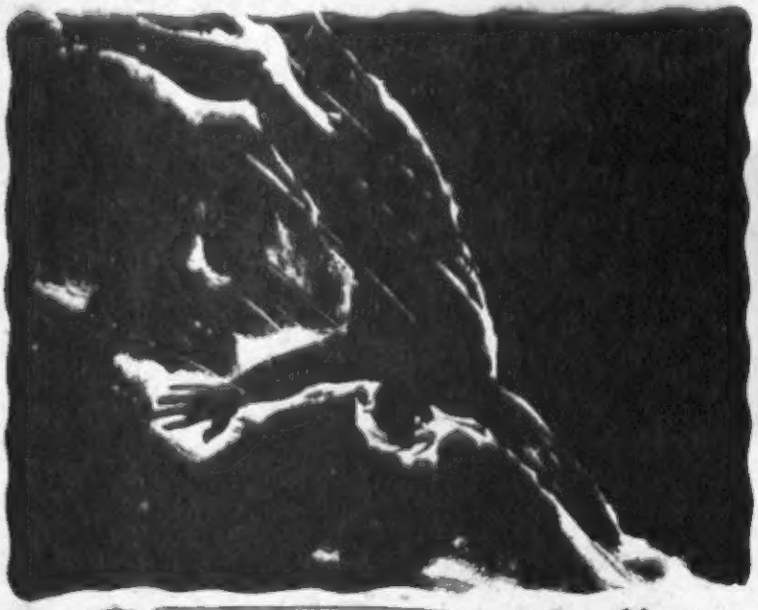
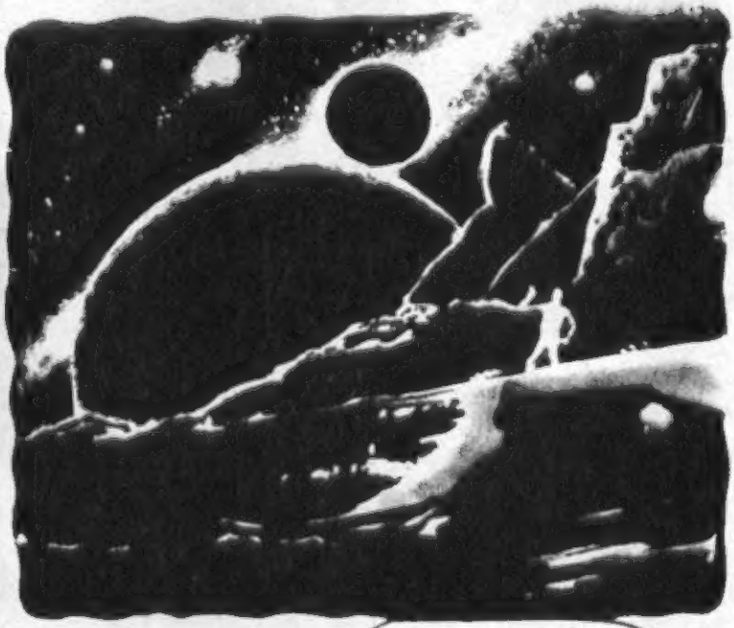
THE EVIL TRIP

HALLUCINATIONS? LET ME RECOUNT THE EVENTS OF TERROR AS BEST I CAN... BECAUSE WHAT HAPPENED IS STILL VERY MUCH UNREAL... I DON'T BELIEVE IT, YET IT IS TRUE!

THEN YOU SEEM TO BE FLOATING RIGIDLY IN A BOUNDLESS REALM OF GHOSTLY SPACE! YEARS APPARENTLY PASS, AND ALL THE TIME YOU ARE UNABLE TO SPEAK OR MOVE...



YOU BLANK OUT AGAIN-- THEN REVIVE TO FIND YOURSELF IN A STRANGE PLACE!

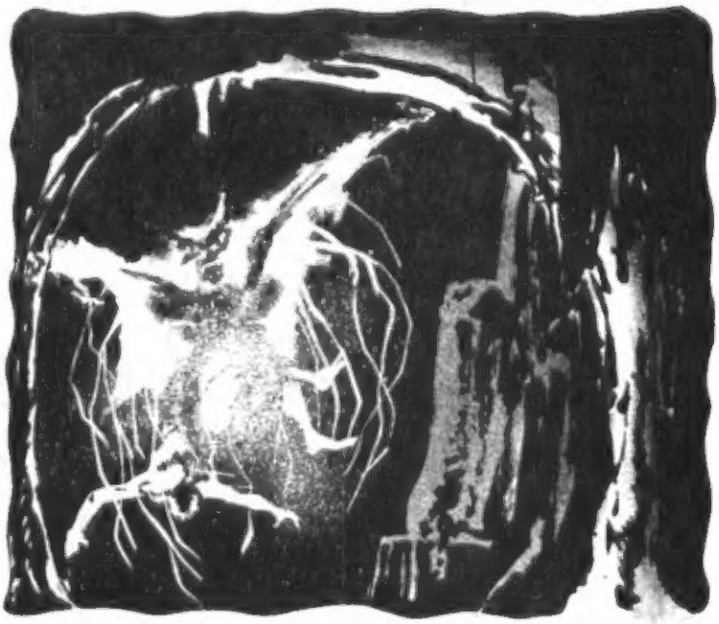


YOU WALK SERENELY ALONG IN YOUR ALIEN SURROUNDINGS--

BUT THIS, HERMAN LASHER, IS NOT A WORLD OF SERENITY, -- AS YOU ABRUPTLY LEARN!

YOU TRY TO FIGHT THE THING OFF, BUT SINEWY ARMS PIN YOU INTO HELPLESSNESS...

YOU ARE CARRIED TO A LEDGE ON A HIGH MOUNTAIN...



THERE IS ANOTHER CREATURE PRONE ON A ROCK! ITS SKULL IS OPEN--AND EMPTY! THEN, TO YOUR HORROR, YOU SOMEHOW REALIZE THAT THIS BEING INTENDS TO PLANT **YOUR** BRAIN IN THAT EMPTY SKULL!

YOU SCREAM--HOPING THAT SOMEONE IN YOUR WORLD OF CONSCIOUSNESS WILL HEAR AND AWAKEN YOU!

SOMEHOW YOU KNOW WHAT TAKES PLACE! ENDLESS PAIN AND HORROR REACH YOUR SEMI-CONSCIOUS MIND!

SUDDENLY YOU EXPLODE INTO THE CONSCIOUS!

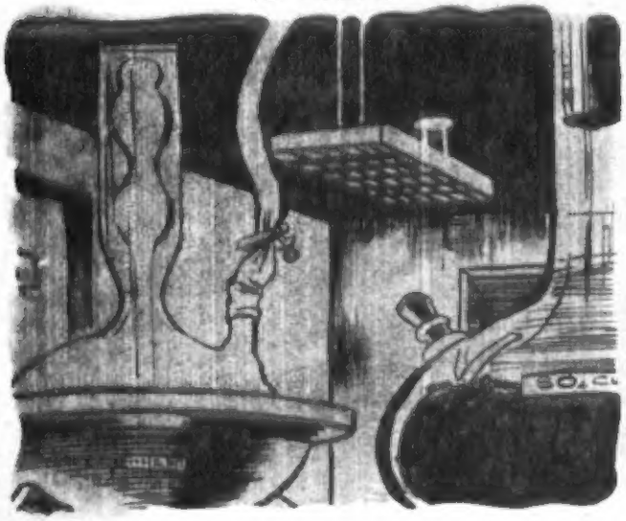
YOU TURN TO SEE THE OTHER CREATURE REGARDING YOU! BEHIND IT LIES A CRUMPLED BODY--**YOUR** BODY!

STRENGTHENED WITH RAGE, YOU LEAP AT THE OTHER, AND CLAW IT'S THROAT OPEN WITH ONE SWIFT SLASH OF YOUR SHARP TALONS!

THEN, DETERMINED TO END THE NIGHTMARE, YOU PLUNGE OFF THE LEDGE!

YOU FALL AND FALL INTO WHAT SEEMS TO BE A BOTTOMLESS PIT! AGAIN YOU FEEL AS THOUGH YOU ARE TRAPPED IN TIME...

YOU OPEN YOUR EYES! YOU ARE LYING ON A HARD FLOOR! A SENSE OF TREMENDOUS RELIEF SWEEP OVER YOU AS YOU RECOGNIZE FAMILIAR OBJECTS IN YOUR LAB! YOU ARE BACK IN YOUR WORLD OF NORMAL CONSCIOUSNESS! YOUR NIGHTMARE IS OVER!



BUT-- AS YOU GET TO YOUR FEET, YOU CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE YOURSELF-- AND YOU RECEIVE THE SUPREME SHOCK!

The End

MEN CREATED US; THEY DEVELOPED US TO WORK, TO FIGHT AND, YES, EVEN TO THINK FOR THEM; THEY USED US TO THE UTMOST, AND THEN THEY TURNED ON US -- ONLY BECAUSE WE WANTED TO BE LIKE THEM; AND THEY CALLED US --

-- THE METAL REPLACEMENTS

"BACK IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY MY RACE HAD STARTED OUT, VERY SIMPLY, AS ADDING MACHINES!"
"IN THE GREAT SCIENTIFIC LABORATORIES, MEN CONSTANTLY EXPERIMENTED TO MAKE US MORE COMPLEX..."
"MAN-LIKE, BUT IT TOOK DOCTOR GORGE TO ACTUALLY MAKE THE REFLEX THEORY WORK..."
THIS BABY'S GOING TO BE ABLE TO THINK FOR ITSELF!
"SOMETIME IN THE YEAR 2534... I WAS GIVEN MY FIRST TESTS BY MY CREATOR..."
POUR CONTENTS OF TEST TUBE A INTO TEST TUBE B; PLACE THEM ON THE RACK; SHUT OFF BURNER...
BZZZRK-CLIK... A INTO B, RACK, BURNER... CLRRK!
"MY NEXT TRIALS WERE IN A HUGE PLANT WATCHED BY AN AUDIENCE..."
WHY, IT THE GREATEST THING SINCE THE ROCKET SHIP WAS DEVELOPED!
"BEFORE LEARNED GROUPS, MY CREATOR EXPLAINED HOW I WORKED..."
THROUGH A SERIES OF ELECTRONIC REFLEXES, THIS ROBOT CAN STORE MEMORIES, RECALL THEM AT WILL, AND DUPLICATE ANYTHING A MAN CAN DO!
"AND AFTER ME CAME THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF OTHERS, BUT THIS WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING..."

"WE HAD TO BE SHOWN WHAT TO DO ONLY ONCE, OUR ELECTRONIC MEMORY REFLEXES DID THE REST...
"WE PILOTED EARTH'S ROCKET SHIPS IN THE GREAT WAR IN THE GALAXIES...
BZZZRK! ATTENTION! APPROACHING MARS GRAVITATION FIELD! CLK!
"AT THE 'ALERT' SIGNAL, OUR NETWORK OF FINE WIRE NERVES WENT INTO ACTION..."
WAR FLEET COMING OUT TO MEET US!
ZZZT! BLAST CANNONS READY...
"WE MET THE ENEMY SHIPS HEAD ON OVER XERES CITY... NOT A TREMOR OF FEAR IN THE WHOLE EARTH FORCE..."
BZZZLOP
BLAMM
"EVEN THE ACTUAL INVASION HAD BEEN PLANNED AND CARRIED OUT BY US... THE ROBOTS..."
SURRENDER... WE CANNOT FIGHT METAL DEMONS!
ZZZT! ON TO CAPITOL CITY!
"BUT IT WAS THE HUMANS WHO MADE THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS!"
A NEW GOVERNMENT WILL BE APPOINTED BY THE SURPREME EARTH COUNCIL!
IT IS AGREED, WE OBEY THE DECREE!
KZZZKT PEACE NEGOTIATIONS... NEW GOVERNMENT... ZZKKK!
"BUT WHAT WE SAW AND HEARD WAS REGISTERING IN OUR MEMORY TUBES..."

"AFTER THE GREAT WARS, THE HUMANS DID LESS AND LESS, WHILE WE ROBOTS DID MORE AND MORE...
"THERE WAS THE NEWLY DISCOVERED PLANET, KARNO--WHICH WE ROBOTS WERE FIRST TO LAND UPON, THE FIRST TO EXPLORE..."
"WE FOUGHT BACK THE WEIRD MONSTERS THAT INFESTED THE JANGLED WILDS...
"AFTER THE DANGERS WERE PASSED, IT WAS WE WHO CLEARED THE LAND, WHO ERECTED THE BUILDINGS..."
"BUT WHEN IT CAME TIME FOR SETTING THE NEW PLANET, IT WAS AGAIN THE HUMANS WHO TOOK OVER...
LOT NUMBER 64 Z; HOUSE A, LOWER LEVEL...
THINK, ANNA--WE'RE AWAY FROM OVER CROWDED EARTH; A PLACE OF OUR OWN!
"AND ONCE AGAIN WE WERE ON THE SIDELINES WATCHING, WONDERING..."
"BY NOW, REMEMBER, WE'D HAD HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF EXPERIENCE REGISTERED IN OUR TUBES..."
BZZZLK! TIME WE ASSERTED OURSELVES...
ZZZZZ! NO, WE CANNOT FIGHT THEM WE WOULD LOSE...
"IT WAS A THIS JUNCTION THAT WE ROBOTS SPLIT INTO TWO FORCES!"
FIGHT THEM! KILL THEM! CLK-BZZZT!
NO! WE ARE METAL, WE ARE ROBOTS!

"THROUGHOUT THE YEARS WE ROBOTS HAD LEARNED TO FEEL SHADES OF EMOTION WE HAD LEARNED TO LOVE AND TO HATE..."
"THE 'HATERS' HAD DECLARED WAR AGAINST ALL THAT WAS HUMAN..."
BZZZRK! KILL THEM!
ROBOTS! WE'RE TRAPPED...
"IT WAS A WAR OF HUMAN AGAINST ROBOT--WHETHER THE ROBOTS WERE GOOD OR BAD MADE NO DIFFERENCE...
THAT'S IT! COUPLE MORE WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT...
"WE WENT INTO HIDING IN THE SWAMPS, BUT THEIR FLYING ROCKETS HUNTED US DOWN..."
ANOTHER ONE! GOT 'IM!
"WE WERE BEATEN FROM THE BEGINNING--GRADUALLY OUR ENERGY GENERATORS WERE RUNNING DOWN..."
"IN THE EARTH COUNCIL, OUR DOOM WAS SEALED..."
IT IS DECREED THAT ALL ROBOTS SHALL BE DISMANTLED AND STRIPPED; HENCEFORTH, THEY SHALL BE OUTLAWED...
"ALL OVER THE UNIVERSE OUR BODIES MADE THE METAL SCRAP HEAPS SWELL--OUR WORK WAS DONE..."

The Beginning

CHAIN Reaction

A GRAIN OF PURE RADITE EQUALS A TON OR MORE OF URANIAN! THROUGH THE GREAT ELECTRO-TELEPHONE, I TOOK A LOOK AT THE NEW AND AMAZING WORLD!

THIS RADITE WORLD IS RAPIDLY APPROACHING MARS! ITS ORBIT IS A NARROW ELIPSE, LIKE A COMET'S!
THE GOVERNMENTS OF EARTH AND MARS MUST ORGANIZE AN EXPEDITION! WE'LL GO TO IT NOW!

WITHIN A MONTH WE WERE READY! I WAS ENGAGED TO LAURA BLAIR, MY CHIEF'S DAUGHTER I WENT TO SAY GOODBYE TO HER
OH, GEORG, BE CAREFUL!
DARLING, DON'T YOU WORRY! THIS IS THE BIGGEST THING THAT'S HAPPENED TO EARTH AND MARS IN A THOUSAND YEARS!

GEORG! WHAT'S THAT?
WHA--?!

WE RUSHED TO THE WINDOW...
THE CITY'S BEING BOMBARDED!

SCENES OF HORROR WERE EVERYWHERE IN FERROK-SHAHN THAT TERRIBLE NIGHT!

HELP!
HELP!

FROM THE BALCONY OF LAURA'S HOME, WE SAW SEMI-HUMAN CREATURES, GLOWING WITH RADIOACTIVITY! ONE OF THEM TOSSED HIS TINY, DIABOLICAL WEAPON AT US...

WE STAGGERED BACK INTO THE ROOM... AND STOOD FROZEN BY A NEW HORROR!
THERE THEY ARE! SEIZE THEM!

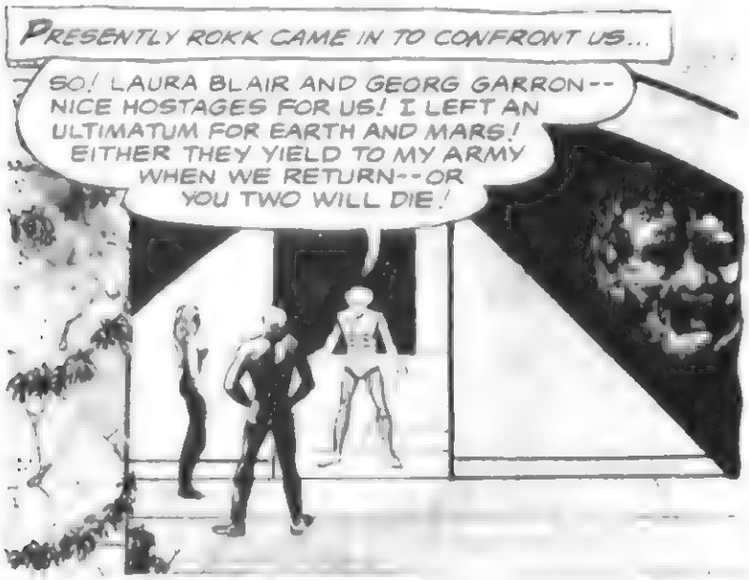
THE GRUESOME HORROR OF IT SO FLOODED ME THAT FOR AN INSTANT I STOOD DAZED...
DON'T KILL THEM IF YOU CAN HELP IT, TOMPKIN! NOT THE GIRL ANYWAY!
KEEP AWAY FROM US!

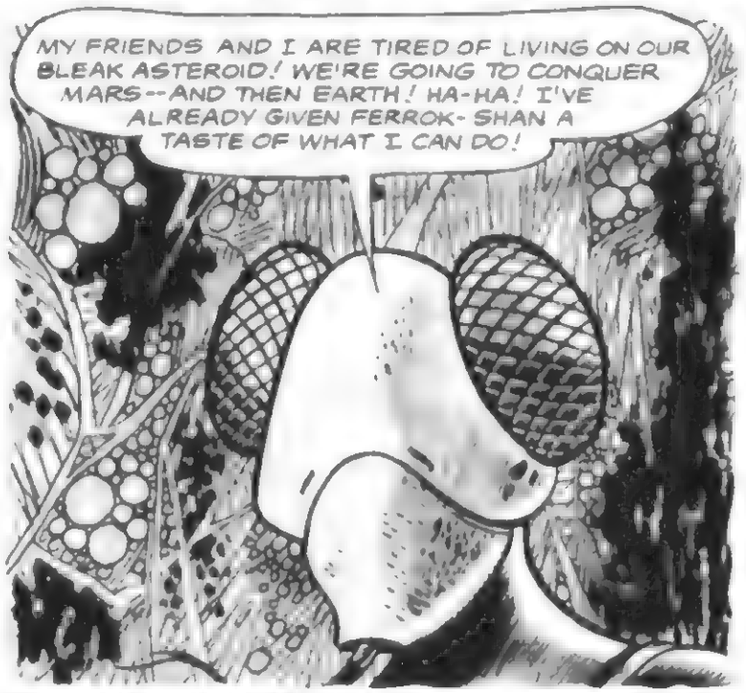
YOU'RE ASKING FOR IT!
UGH!

MY SENSES FADED AS I FELL...

I CAME TO MY SENSES WITH LAURA BENDING OVER ME! WE WERE ON A SPACE-SHIP...
OH, GEORG, I'VE BEEN SO SCARED!
G-GUESS I'M ALL RIGHT! WHAT HAPPENED?

WE'RE ON THEIR SPACE-SHIP! THEY'RE TAKING US TO THE ASTEROID! THEIR LEADER'S NAME IS ROKK!
ROKK? THAT SOUNDS FAMILIAR, LAURA... BUT I CAN'T SEEM TO REMEMBER...!


PRESENTLY ROKK CAME IN TO CONFRONT US...
SO! LAURA BLAIR AND GEORG GARRON-- NICE HOSTAGES FOR US! I LEFT AN ULTIMATUM FOR EARTH AND MARS! EITHER THEY YIELD TO MY ARMY WHEN WE RETURN--OR YOU TWO WILL DIE!


MY FRIENDS AND I ARE TIRED OF LIVING ON OUR BLEAK ASTEROID! WE'RE GOING TO CONQUER MARS--AND THEN EARTH! HA-HA! I'VE ALREADY GIVEN FERROK-SHAN A TASTE OF WHAT I CAN DO!

I REMEMBERED HIM NOW! AN EARTHMAN CRIMINAL, SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT IN THE MARTAIN JAILS! I REMEMBERED HIM WHEN...
I SENTENCE YOU TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT!

LATER HE AND A SCORE OF FELLOW EARTHMEN CRIMINALS HAD ESCAPED...
IT'S ROKK!
AND ALL THE OTHER EARTH-CRIMINALS!

THEY HAD BEEN NORMAL EARTHMEN THEN! WHAT A GHASTLY DIFFERENCE NOW!
WE ESCAPED TO A LITTLE ASTEROID! HA! HA! A WONDERFUL LITTLE ASTEROID OF ALMOST PURE RADITE! TEN YEARS WE'VE BEEN LIVING THERE!

LATER...
THE ASTEROID'S DEADLY RADIO-ACTIVITY... TEN YEARS OF IT... DID THAT TO ROKK AND HIS MEN!

AND THOSE GLOWING MONSTERS! UGH!
THE ASTEROIDS INHABITANTS! RADIO ACTIVE CREATURES! RADIUM MONSTERS!

THROUGH THE PORTE WE SAW OUR DESTINATION!
THAT ASTEROID IS WHERE YOU WERE GOING, GEORG! OH, IF I'D REALIZED--
WE WOULD HAVE PROTECTED OURSELVES!

PRESENTLY WE WERE READY TO DISEMBARK WITH THE ASTEROID WORLD SPREAD BEFORE US!
HERE WE ARE! ALL THIS RADITE! IT LOOKS SO NICE-- BUT DEADLY!
LAURA! I'M GOING TO MAKE A TRY AT GETTING AWAY NOW! WE MAY BE KILLED... BUT HERE GOES!

LAURA, STAND BACK FROM THE PORTE! I'VE GOT A PLAN TO GET US AWAY--!

DESPERATELY I SEIZED THE WEAPON AT ROKK'S BELT, AND...
YOU KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I EXPLODE THIS HERE, ROKK! I'LL DO IT IF I HAVE TO!
NO! NO! YOU FOOL! STOP! STOP!

WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE! BUT WE DON'T WANT YOU WITH US! LAURA! HURRY! GET INSIDE!

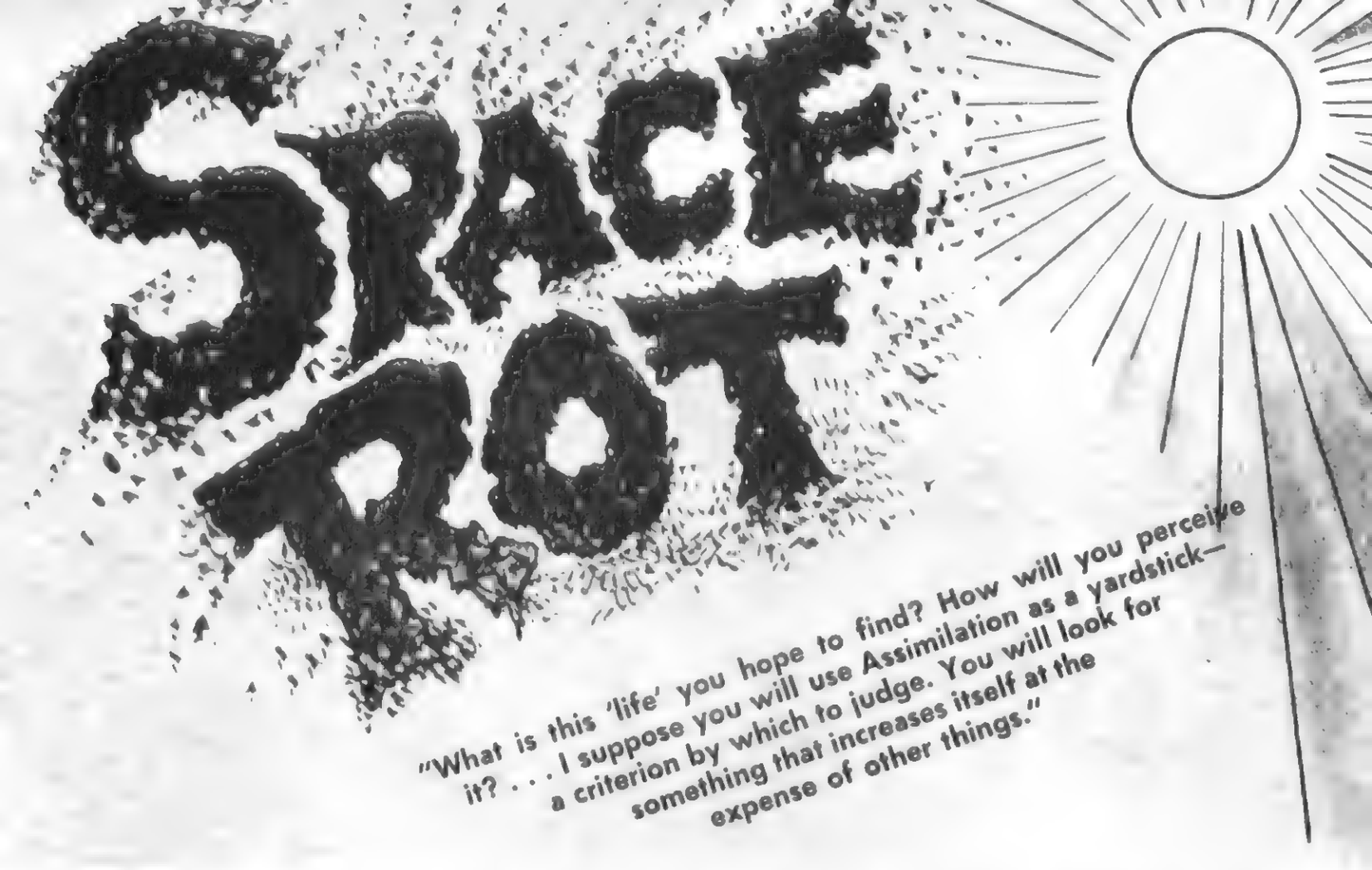
WE DASHED FOR THE SPACESHIP'S CONTROLS! AND IN ANOTHER MOMENT...

IT WAS FATE THAT DOOMED THE LITTLE WORLD OF RADITE! I HAD DROPPED ROKK'S WEAPON TO THE GROUND! IT'S TIME-FUSE MUST HAVE FIRED!
OH, GEORG-- LOOK!
WHA-?!

DEADLY, RADIOACTIVE LITTLE WORLD! ONE TINY ATOMIC EXPLOSION STARTED ANOTHER!... AND ANOTHER...! A CHAIN REACTION!

A VAST TREASURE OF RADITE, THE SCIENTISTS OF EARTH AND MARS CONSIDERED IT! PERHAPS THIS WAS BETTER... IT IS NOT FOR ME TO SAY! WE STARED DOWN, AWED, AT THE END OF A WORLD!

THE END



■ The laboratory was a large, square room, with long windows on two sides. Against the walls were set lead-topped tables, littered with tubes, retorts, and various electrical devices. But it was towards the center of the room that George Dixon stared, wide-eyed.

There, on a small table, under a bell-jar reposed a little heap of black dust. Nothing more. There was certainly nothing in the exhibit to astonish an ordinary observer.

Yet George Dixon was both astonished and terrified. For he knew that, only yesterday, there had been, under that jar, a pretty fair sized block, composed of his "life force." And now it was gone. Where?

Things had to go somewhere, he told himself. The jar was sealed tightly to the glass plate beneath. Yet there remained only black dust—and George knew what that was.

He laid his hand on the glass. Warm, but not hot. His eyes wandered around the room—then became fixed upon a grotesque object on the window ledge. It was—or, rather, had been— his geranium plant; but now the leaves were a dead black. As he watched, one of them dropped off, and crumbled to powder on the floor.

George drew his hand across his eyes. Something was happening—something he could not understand. He must try to think. But it was hard to think. His mind didn't seem to work right—kept wandering. He wished Julius were there. Julius would help him.

He stared at the geranium plant. Even the stalk was black. It was crumbling away—as his little block had crumbled. But that didn't make it any easier. No, he couldn't think. If only Julius . . .

He remembered the things Julius had said when they had last talked together. Julius had come to visit him—an unusual occurrence—saying that he was interested in a proposed experiment George had mentioned in a letter. George had explained cautiously his intentions to explore for life in substances deposited on Earth from outside.

"What is life?" Julius had asked abruptly. George remembered laughing. Julius had a way of asking unanswerable questions. George had muttered something about Assimilation.

"Life is a disease,"—Julius had a way of asking unanswerable questions —and then answering them.

"Disease!" George had exclaimed.

"Exactly. A disease or corruption which afflicts the stagnant matter which is Earth. This planet's matter is very low in energy. It is cooling—disintegrating. And you and I are the crawling, writhing maggots of its decay."

"Horrible and preposterous!"

"Horrible, perhaps—but not preposterous. We say that life cannot exist upon the sun. Why? Because the sun is too hot for it. What does that mean? Merely that the sun has the protective energy to purge or sterilize itself of such a 'life' as we represent. Place a needle point in the flame—as the doctor uses daily; there you have the same sort of sterilization, on a small scale."

George had been slightly indignant. "You put a disagreeable interpretation on a few small facts. That may amuse you, Julius; but I fail to see how such speculations can have any practical value . . ."

"They might serve as a warning to such as you."

"Warning?"

"Yes. If I understand your motives correctly, you want to explore life in meteoric substances. Since they consist of matter in a very low state of energy, and because mere cold is not always fatal to life, even as we know it, I fully believe that you will find what you are looking for."

"That is gratifiying. It makes you practically unique among scientists!"

Julius had not appeared amused. "But I am far from believing that you are wise in attempting it. When you find it—what then?"

"What then?—I don't understand you."

"Well—do you expect it to be identical with some form of life we ex-

perience on Eearh?"

"Not necessarily."

"Probably?"

"No. I should say that the probability points in the other direction. Life is a product of its environment, and it would be a remarkable coincidence if this supposed new life had developed under conditions identical with those on Earth.

"It is my theory that some such 'life' may exist in meteoric substances, in a state of suspended animation—induced perhaps by lack of heat and most certainly by lack of food. To put it briefly, I intend to test for its presence and a variety of temperatures and a variety of foods . . ."

George remembered that Julius had nodded absently. There had been a strange look in his heavy eyes as he asked quietly: "And are you not afraid?"

George shuddered, now, as he lay back in his chair. He felt dizzy and sick. His body was numb, with that helpless, prickly numbness one sometimes feels locally when his foot is "asleep." Yes, he was afraid now—but, then he had merely said. "Afraid?—afraid of what?"

Julius drew a folded newspaper from his pocket and held it out, indicating with his finger a paragraph:—

STRANGE THEFT
IN MUSEUM

An unidentified man visited the American Museum of Natural History late yesterday afternoon, and departed with one small meteorite, the property of that establishment. He was seen by a guard, rapidly leaving the building, after having stood for some time over a case containing a number of similar exhibits. Dr. Hardman, Curator, when questioned, could suggest no motive for such a theft

George looked up curiously from the paper. Julius was leaning back, negligently tossing from one hand to the other a small black stone. "Catch!" he said.

Clumsily George caught it. "Why, you can't—I can't—It isn't right!" he stammered.

"That is my affair!" snapped Julius "The moral stigma attached to you by the transaction—that of receiving stolen goods, I suppose—is very small and very theoretical . . ."

"But—"

"But, nothing! That little thing is going to be put to a real use, instead of being eternally gaped at by a succession of idiots who don't give a damn what it is or where it came from . . . Now I'm going."

"But wait a minute, Julius! What do you really think about this experiment? What is your honest opinion?"

"I think it is a very promising line of enquiry and a very laudable task. Praiseworthy but uncertain.

"What is this 'life' you hope to find? How will you perceive it? Have you stopped to think that there may be life that we cannot observe through the senses developed on Earth—that does not obey the rules we have set up?

"I suppose you will use Assimilation as a yardstick—a criterion by which to judge. You will look for *something* that increases itself at the expense of other things. A ticklish job, at the best; because that something may be intangible, immeasurabe, and altogether strange to you. In other words, you are looking for a new disease—one that you will not understand when you find it . . . What will it attack? What will it feed on? . . . Who knows?"

Julius had gone, then. An unsociable man, his visits were very rare and very short

George wished Julius were there now. He needed someone else to think for him. The little block—the food—was gone. *Was* there something there—*something* that increased itself at the expense of other things? Had he succeeded? Was there life? . . . The food was gone. But there was the "something that increased itself?"

Under the glass—it must be. Everything had been sealed tight . . .

* * *

In the pot on the window-ledge was

only a stalk. All the rest was black dust. He stared at it dully . . . Suddenly a glimpse of something on the arm of his chair made him start violently. It moved towards him—a dead gray thing, splotched with black. He stared at it unbelievingly . . .

It was his hand!

A horrible possibility flashed into his mind; and, with a sob, he blundered out of the room, desperately slamming the door. He needed help—he needed Julius. The telephone . . .

Julius Humboldt was cursing softly as he grasped the receiver, but when he laid it down his expression was very serious. The confused babble on the wire would have been meaningless to anyone else, but it galvanized him into action. Hurriedly, he set about dressing, moving quickly about the tiny room.

Five minutes later, a shabby figure, he tip-toed down a very shabby staircase and emerged on Tenth Avenue. Turning east, he half walked, half ran along Forty-ninth Street towards Broadway.

At Broadway, he plunged down the steps into the subway and boarded a downtown train. Arriving at the Pennsylvania Station, he learned that the next Port Washington train left at four. Muttering to himself he studied a timetable. Great Neck—four-forty . . . He paced up and down the platform . . .

The gates clattered open and, absentmindedly, he boarded the train.

The Great Neck station was deserted, and he set out at a quick pace to cover the half mile to George Dixon's house. The sky was overcast, and no signs of dawn were yet visible. The damp air enveloped him like a black mist, depressing his spirits and seeming to increase the sense of heavy foreboding which he suffered. The large house, set back among trees, was an ominous jet shadow, as he approached it up a winding path. Obsessed with a strange uneasiness, he walked on tiptoe, straining his eyes and ears.

In another instant he was frozen into immobility by a laugh—a sudden, high-pitched, gurgling laugh, it rose and fell and ended in a sob.

He gazed fixedly at the house. That was not George. Who—what—was there? Slowly he advanced, mounted the steps, and laid his hand on the doorknob. From inside the house there came a shrill cry, a crash—then silence.

The door was unlocked. For a long time he stood very still, his head thrust forward. Then he slipped quietly into the black interior.

"Pretty well cleaned out," he muttered. "It's gone, all right!" Again he glanced around. This time his eye was caught by the unusual appearance of the flower-pot on the window ledge. It appeared to be filled with something black. He walked over and dug into the surface with his finger. Underneath was dry earth. It was just a thin layer of powder on top. He pursed his lips.

A sound behind made him wheel around, and gaze into the hall-way. Slowly there took shape in the darkness there a crouching, mottled figure. It was a man—half naked—whose skin was a dead grey in color—splotched with black. It was staring at him with wide, fixed eyes; and creeping forward with a convulsive motion of the lower legs. All the hope went out of him, as he recognized George Dixon. He cursed.

"George!—In God's name, what's the matter?"

Julius Humboldt had taken three quick steps forward when the other leaped. He had a flashing glimpse of wide eyes, flaring nostrils, bared teeth—and ducked instinctively. The flying body struck him a glancing blow on the shoulder, and crashed full-length on the floor. He stared at it, horrified.

"George."

The prostrate creature screamed, and beat the floor with its fists. Humboldt recoiled instinctively.

"Mad!" he breathed through the white lips. He advanced gingerly; and, kneeling down, placed a hand gently on the other's shoulder. There came a quick, sharp snarl; and he snatched his hand violently from between the other's closing teeth.

Again he leaped back, and stood rigidly still. Hurried thoughts raced through his brain. He would have to do something for George—and do it quick. A doctor . . .?

He frowned irritably. What would a doctor do? He didn't want some fool messing around and making things worse. What would a doctor treat for? What was wrong with George?—that was the question.

George had babbled something about a geranium. Now, what . . . Suddenly he remembered the flower pot, and his eyes widened. At last the thing became clear to him. He felt that he could visualize graphically what had happened—what was happening. Rays shooting out—radiating—in all direc-

tions from the jar; passing through the plant on the window ledge—and consuming it; passing through George . . .

He shuddered. The brain, the nerves—the most delicate organs—would go first, naturally. He must do something—get a doctor; a sedative might help. He left the room, and locked the door behind him. Making for the telephone stand, he tripped over something. It was the telephone.

He picked up the telephone; then he shrugged and set it down . . . Couldn't call a doctor. Couldn't call anybody. Nobody would understand. They would take George to a hospital where he would spread disaster at a terrific rate. Warnings would be no use; people never paid any attention to warnings they could not understand. They would laugh at him; he could hear them . .

What to do with George? Would have to keep him quiet. Frowning heavily, he descended the stairs. The racket in the laboratory was steadily increasing in volume. To the pounding was now added shrill, angry cries.

He unlocked the door. As he turned the knob, the door burst open, knocking him violently backwards. Before he could regain his balance the other was upon him. As he was borne to the floor, all other emotions were dominated by his amazement at the homicidal tendencies of this man who, a week ago, had been as mild-mannered and studious as one could wish.

He fought vainly against the powerful, frenzied grip on his throat. Blood pounded in his ears; his temples throbbed. With his one free hand he reached along the floor for something that he knew was there. He found it,—the telephone—and, swinging it up, relentlessly clubbed the head of his assailant. The grip on his throat relaxed, and the body of George Dixon rolled over limply on the floor. Getting to his feet he raised it in his arms; and slowly mounted the stairs. He laid it on the bed and bent over it. Out for three or four hours, he decided with relief. He needed at least that.

He searched methodicaly through the clothes in the closet, but found only a little over six dollars. A further search of the bureau netted only the check-book of a local bank. He stared at this latter find long and thoroughly; then shook his head. No, he would try searching the rest of the house first. An hour's search, however, brought no results; and at seven o'clock he was seated at a desk with the check-book and one of George's letters before him.

Promptly at nine he was at the local bank. The young teller looked thoughtfully at the check he presented.

"Are you staying with Mr. Dixon, Mr.—Mr. . . .?"

"Humboldt. Yes, I am."

"Well—it's a rather large—"

"If it is identification you want, I have a letter from Mr. Dixon to myself," said Humboldt brusquely.

An hour later—richer by a few grams of morphine and a syringe; poorer by a considerable sum of money—he was studying a classified telephone directory. Finding what he wanted, he called a number, and gave an order. There appeared to be some difficulty at the other end; and he spoke irritably.

"Yes—*lead*. Can you hear me? . . . Good!—Do you have one, or not? . . . Good! I want immediate delivery . . . What? . . . I don't care what it costs . . . Yes—this afternoon . . . Good! . . . Get a truck. I will pay all delivery charges . . ."

He gave the address, and hung up. The journey back to Great Neck he spent in deep thought. How to study the Rays? How to make them tangible—measurable?—An electroscope? Photographic plates?

He groaned in despair. All that was so arduous—so complicated; and he had need for speed. The Rays were spreading rapidly, he was certain; eating into the timbers of the house, into the grounds, perhaps . . .

To his immense relief the house was quiet when he let himself in at the front door. He mounted the stairs on tip-toe, and cautionusly unlocked the bedroom door. Caution left him, then; and for a moment he was overcome by nausea. Forcing himself, he approached, wide-eyed, the black lump on the bed. The head was bald, and the one ear that he could see was no more than a stump. The nose was a black wound in the ghastly face. The eyes were gone.

Fighting his disgust, he reached out a hand. The body felt like warm mud. He shuddered, and drew back. No need for the hypo now—but he was glad he had got the other thing . . .

His eye was caught by three ugly indentations in the skull. *His* work . . .

Horror surged up within him, and he dashed headlong from the room and down the stairs. He sank weakly into a chair in the living room. He was trembling; felt very tired—incapable of

thought. He knew he had better get out of the house. Death was there. He imagined the Rays driving through the air about him. He felt that he could almost see them. They would be coming from many sources now—shooting in all directions . . .

His head fell back upon the cushion of the chair. He knew he must get up, but he needed a little rest. His strength was exhausted . . . Suddenly his eyes became intent. He had been gazing at the ceiling, but had not until now noticed the dark, irregular stain in its center.

He wondered about it. It alarmed him, somehow . . .

What would cause such a stain? What was above this room? Feebly he concentrated on the problem. The stair . . . the hall—to the right was—yes, George's bedroom! The thing was lying there—yes, in the center right above the stain . . .

He shivered. He would have to get

The stain had a peculiar shape. He relaxed . . .

The stain had a peculiar shape. He decided that it had legs—a head—and one arm. He watched it steadily. It seemed to move a little . . .

Yes, it was moving! In sudden alarm, he struggled to rise; but could not. The one arm of the shape was stretching out towards him. He knew how it would feel—like warm mud . . . His terror was a physical pain, but he could not move.

Suddenly it was all around him—the warm mud. He was sinking in it, and could not breathe. Death was near, but help was coming. He could hear it—a small bell, very faint. Then a booming sound. He renewed his struggles—and suddenly was free . . .

Julius Humboldt opened his eyes, and leaped to his feet. He had been asleep. Now there was somebody at the front door—ringing, knocking. He would have to go, but it was a damned nuisance! He stepped into the hall. Certainly didn't want visitors. But maybe it was . . .

He started slightly as he swung open the door, and saw the policeman. He remained silent, collecting his wits . . .

"Mr. Dixon home?" rumbled the officer.

Julius Humboldt put out his hand, and grasped the door-post. He stood perfectly still, frowning. Then: "No. He is not at home," he said.

"No?"—the officer's tone was peculiar—"Well, maybe you know something about this.—Is your name Humboldt?"

"Yes,"—Humboldt stared fixedly at the slip of paper. The officer shook it impatiently . . .

"Where'd you get this check?" he asked loudly.

"From Mr. Dixon."

"Yes?—Well, I wanna hear Dixon say that . . ." He took a step forward. Humboldt did not move.

"Mr. Dixon is not at home," he repeated.

The officer growled. "Oh!—so you're gonna get hard, huh? You better be nice—get me? This here check is a phoney; an' I got a good mind to take you along to the station now!" He eyed the other's shabby clothes with extreme disfavor.

"You know that you can do nothing of the sort," pointed out Humboldt calmly, "until you have found Mr. Dixon."

"Well, I'm gonna find 'im soon enough. An' now I'm gonna search this house." He made another forward movement. Still Humboldt did not move.

"You have a warrant?"—his voice was cold.

Again the policeman stopped and glowered. "Hard guy, ain't yu?—Well—"

He was interrupted by the sound of a heavy truck rumbling up the drive. He turned. "What do these guys want?"

Humboldt's lips tightened. "That is none of your affair!"

"No?—We'll see about that . . . Hey! What do you guys want?" He addressed the driver, who had by now climbed down from his seat.

The driver looked alarmed—then indignant. "Why, we got the coffin . . . We was to deliver it here—a lead coffin. An' damned heavy it—"

"Oh, a *coffin*" the officer cut in. He swung around upon Humboldt. "Is *that* all? . . . Say there's something damned funny about this house . . ." He looked up and down, apparently including the entire house in his broad sneer. "We got a lot of complaints about noises in this house last night—screams like . . . An' now a *coffin!*"

Suddenly he swung around, and bellowed at the gaping truck driver. "Take that thing down to the station-house, an' leave it there. We don't have no funerals around here without the undertaker! And as for you—" he turned to Humboldt—"I'm comin' back—get me? . . . *With* a warrant—"

Suddenly he stopped, and gaped at the other. "What the hell have you got on your face?"

A chill shot through Humboldt. He stiffened. Then: "That, also, is none of your affair," he said softly.

The officer favored him with a look of concentrated venom. "All right, Wise Guy—you wait!"—he stamped down the steps and Humboldt closed the door.

He walked very slowly, and with clenched fists, to a mirror. One glance was enough to tell him what he wanted to know, but he stared for a long time with a kind of fascination at his terrible face. Then he turned, and walked out of the house. He noted without surprise—scarcely with interest—that the grass, up against the front of the porch, was black, burnt-looking. He looked up at the window of George's bedroom.

A maple tree grew near the house, and a large branch forked towards that

window. The leaves were not green. They, too, were black and burnt-looking. Humboldt laughed harshly.

Study the Rays! Much chance he would have! You couldn't study a thing that crumbled your body—stole your reason . . . Even his one little gesture had been thwarted, he thought bitterly. He had hoped to protect the world from George with a lead shield. And they had taken that . . .

He would be the second to go—but not the last. Perhaps the policeman would be the third. He would warn him . . .

Warn him! Again he laughed. He would say, "Don't go into that house—warrant or no warrant. In there is invisible Death. I don't know what it is. It comes from out of the skies."

And the policeman would say, "Gettin' funny, huh?"

But even if the policeman were convinced, and didn't go in, the Rays would spread—through the grass, through the trees, through the ground. How much air could they traverse?

What were they? He called them "Rays." He had made a word picture for them. But it was a word picture—nothing more. This he knew: that they were *something* that fed on Earthly substances—mainly living things, it seemed. How could you stop a thing like that . . .?

He stiffened suddenly; his jaw set; and he strode swiftly to the road, and down the hill towards the town. He would try once more. He might beat the policeman to it. He smiled grimly. Thief, forger, buyer of drugs, possibly murderer—he would try to beat the Law once again. He would commit one more crime—perhaps two . . .

Ten minutes brought him to a filling station. "Do you have any five-gallon tins?" he inquired of the attendant.

"Yes, sir!"

"Well, my car is out of gas—up in Mr. Dixon's garage. I want you to fill two tins, and drive me up there."

"Well, I can give you a gallon; and then you can stop by here, and—"

"Do what I say!" snapped Humboldt, "and don't stand too near me."

The other merely gaped at him.

"Get it!"—Humboldt threw a roll of bills at the attendant. The latter succeeded in mastering his astonishment.

"Yes, sir!" he cried. He filled the cans, and placed them in a rickety car. Humboldt got into the back seat.

"Go up the driveway, and set them over at the front," he directed. The other pulled up before the front steps.

"Don't you want them in the garage?" he objected.

"Do as I say," said Humboldt again. The man deposited the cans on the steps, and prepared to go.

"Had a fire?" he inquired chattily, looking around at the grass.

Humboldt did not answer. He lifted one of the cans, and lugged it into the house. He heard the car rattle away.

From the kitchen, at the back of the house, he secured a dipper; and began methodically to scatter the liquid in all the rooms—on the floors, walls, ceilings, and furniture. He hurried, running from one room to another. His legs felt numb; he was a little dizzy; and then there was the policeman . . .

He went upstairs. In one of the rooms he found a closet, which had a tiny window looking out upon a grove of trees at the back of the house.

"Private in back," he muttered, with an approving smile. Then he tried the key in the lock, and put it on the inside. He went on with this work. Upon the thing that had been George Dixon he poured a gallon of the fluid. Then he went downstairs and out of the house.

There was no one in sight. The grounds were fairly spacious, the nearest house being over three hundred yards away. Slowly he walked around the house, emptying his second tin on the walls and porches— on the grass. Lastly, he laid a little tin train of it out across the back yard . . . It was getting dark.

He lighted a cigarette; and, stooping dropped the match on the last little splotch of gasoline. A tiny flame shot up; and ran towards the house.

He walked slowly around to the front; and went in, locking the door behind him. He sat down on the staircase; and, reaching into his pocket, drew out the little bottle of morphine and the syringe. Might as well make use of it, after all, he thought with some satisfaction.

The sight of his hands sickened him: ugly, black—looked as if they might fall apart . . . He charged the syringe from the bottle.

Perhaps he was saving other people from having hands like this. Deprived of food, this "life" or whatever it was from another star, might die a natural death. Then again it might not. But the chances were that he was doing a whole lot of people a lot of good . . .

He dug the needle into his leg, and laughed. Anyway, he had nothing to lose! A fine hero! . . . Julius Humboldt had always found it hard to be sentimental . . . He got to his feet, and slowly climbed the stairs. It was difficult to move. He went into the closet, and lifted the tiny window. A roar and a wave of hot air greeted him. He drew back with a smile, and locked the closet door.

A tongue of flame shot up past the window, licking at the sill. He gazed at it admiringly. Wonderful stuff—fire! . . . Clean . . . pure . . . vital! Highest state of matter.

The heat was choking him now. The roaring and the heat were now tremendous . . . He laughed.

Robbery . . . forgery . . . murder arson . . . and now, one more!

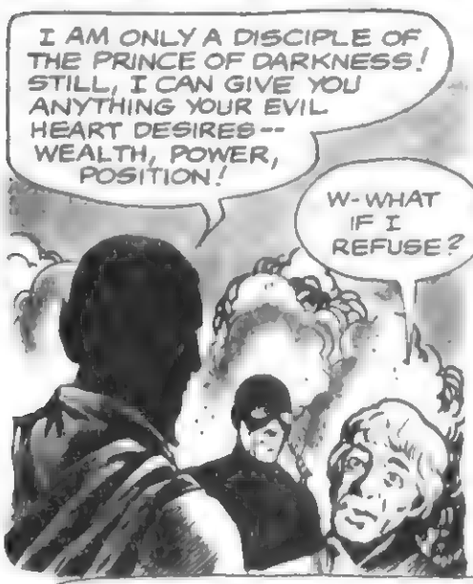
He tossed the key into the flame. ●

TORTURE CHAMBER
NO, NO! NO, YOUR DREAD MAJESTY, BAALZAAR... NOT THE PIT! AAAEEE!
SCREAM ON! I HAVEN'T HEARD SUCH CRIES OF TERROR IN A LONG TIME! INTO THE PIT WITH HIM, AT ONCE!
FOR YEARS SIR JOHN DRUMMOND SAT LIKE A FIENDISH VULTURE ON THE BENCH OF OLD BAILEY! HE WAS CALLED MANY NAMES: HANGMAN, SADIST, BLOOD-CRAZED MADMAN... FOR HE SNUFFED OUT LIVES WITH A SATISFIED SMILE! WHAT GAVE HIM THIS TERRIBLE POWER OVER OVER LIFE AND DEATH? WE MUST GO BACK TO THE NIGHT OF MAY 15, 1751, TO LEARN OF A STRANGE EVIL ALLIANCE...

BEFORE HIS UNHOLY ALLIANCE, NOBODY THOUGHT MUCH OF JOHN DRUMMOND, LEAST OF ALL HIS EMPLOYER, PHILLIP JOBES!
YOU'RE A HEARTLESS MAN, DRUMMOND! THIS BRIEF IS FULL OF VENOM AND SHOWS NO SYMPATHY FOR THE DEFENDENT, AND NO UNDERSTANDING! THAT'S WHY I'M LETTING YOU GO!
MR. JOBES! I WOULDN'T STAY ON IF YOU DOUBLED MY SALARY!
HA, HAW! WHY, YOU IDIOT, NO ONE IN LONDON WILL HIRE YOU AFTER YOUR DISMISSAL IS KNOWN!
GO AHEAD, LAUGH AT ME, WILL YOU! I'LL SHOW YOU MR. JOBES! I'LL MAKE YOU CHOKE ON YOUR LAUGHTER!
INSANE RAGE SWEPT THROUGH DRUMMOND, AND BEFORE HE COULD SUPPRESS IT...
WHY DON'T YOU LAUGH NOW, MR. JOBES... OR IS IT MY TURN TO LAUGH?
WHY YOU-- AAAA!!!!
WHEN JOBES FELL DEAD, TERROR REPLACED THE RAGE IN DRUMMONDS HEART AS HE HEARD FROM THE WINDOW...
NINE O'CLOCK AND ALL'S WELL!
THE NIGHT WATCH! I'LL BE FOUND AND TAKEN TO PRISON! I'LL BE HANGED!
NOBODY WILL SUSPECT ME! THEY'LL BLAME THIEVES FOR THIS MURDER!
WHA...? WHO ARE YOU? IN HEAVENS NAME, WHAT DO YOU WANT?
MASTER BAALZAAR, HAS SENT ME FOR A MAN WITHOUT A CONSCIENCE! YOU, JOHN DRUMMOND, ANSWER THAT DISCRIPTION! COME, OR SHALL THE NIGHT WATCH TAKE YOU?
THE NIGHT WATCH WAS ALREADY IN THE COURTYARD...
THERE WAS A CRY FROM YON LIGHTED OFFICE, MEN! IT IS OUR DUTY TO INVESTIGATE!
NO, NO! THEY MUST NOT FIND ME! I-I'LL GO WITH YOU!
DRUMMOND WALKED AS IN A DAZE, BARELY FEELING THE GROUND UNDERFOOT...
YOU'VE LED ME HERE TO KILL ME! I'VE BEEN TRICKED! I SHOULD HAVE TAKEN MY CHANCES WITH THE WATCH!
YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN BEHEADED, COME, WE MUST ENTER HERE!

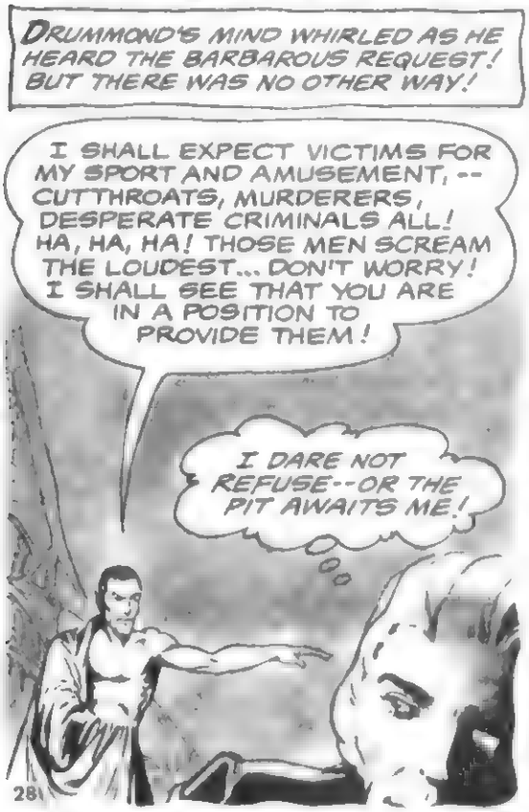
AS DRUMMOND WATCHED, THE GREAT DOUBLE EDGED AXE CAME CRASHING DOWN ON THE SOLID MARBLE...
OPEN IN THE NAME OF BAALZAAR!
CLANG

A TIME WORN SUITCASE BROUGHT THEM TO THE COURT OF BAALZAAR...
WELCOME TO MY COURT, JOHN DRUMMOND! COME CLOSER, I WANT TO SEE THE MAN I'VE CHOSEN TO DO MY WORK IN THE OUTER WORLD!
W-WHY, IT'S SATAN; THE EVIL ONE HIMSELF!


I AM ONLY A DISCIPLE OF THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS! STILL, I CAN GIVE YOU ANYTHING YOUR EVIL HEART DESIRES -- WEALTH, POWER, POSITION!
W-WHAT IF I REFUSE?

THEN THIS IS THE ONLY CHOICE LEFT TO YOU!

I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU WANT! BUT TAKE THIS HELLISH SCENE AWAY! I CAN'T STAND IT!
HA! HA! HA! HO! HO! HO! LISTEN TO THEM SCREAM! HOW MUSICAL! HOW PRECIOUS! HA! HA! HA! I KNEW YOU WOULD CHANGE YOUR MIND, DRUMMOND! NOW LISTEN TO MY TERMS!


DRUMMOND'S MIND WHIRLED AS HE HEARD THE BARBAROUS REQUEST! BUT THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY!
I SHALL EXPECT VICTIMS FOR MY SPORT AND AMUSEMENT, -- CUTTHROATS, MURDERERS, DESPERATE CRIMINALS ALL! HA, HA, HA! THOSE MEN SCREAM THE LOUDEST... DON'T WORRY! I SHALL SEE THAT YOU ARE IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE THEM!
I DARE NOT REFUSE--OR THE PIT AWAITS ME!

NOW THE BARGAIN MUST BE SEALED WITH MY OWN BRAND! IT WILL REMIND YOU WHEN MEMORY FAILS! HOLD STILL!
NO...! I-I'LL NEVER FORGET!

AS THE FLAMING STEEL BIT DEED INTO HIS SKIN, DRUMMOND'S SENSES REELED WITH AGONIZED PAIN...
NEVER FORGET! NEVER! NEVER! NEVER!

BLINDING SUNLIGHT BROUGHT DRUMMOND TO FULL CONSCIOUSNESS...
TH-THEN IT WASN'T A DREAM AFTER ALL! BAALZAAR AND HIS COURT OF HORROR WERE REAL... AND THE BARGAIN I MADE WAS BINDING!
AT THE CEMETERY ENTRANCE A SOLEMN PROCESSION BLOCKED HIS PATH!
SO THERE YOU ARE, MR. DRUMMOND! WEVE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU ALL DAY SINCE MR. JOBES' DEATH! WE NEED SOMEONE WHO WAS CLOSE TO HIM WHO COULD HANDLE OUR LEGAL AFFAIRS!
WHY, I-- YES, GLADLY! OF COURSE, GENTLEMEN!
FROM THIS POINT ON, DRUMMOND'S STAR ROSE...
JOBES WOULD TURN IN HIS GRAVE IF HE SAW THIS! BUT IT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING...
BARRISTER
JOHN DRUMMOND
SUCCESSOR TO
PHILIP JOBES
HIS FAME AS A TRIAL LAWYER REAPED THE HIGHEST HONORS OF STATE...
AND BY THE POWERS INVESTED IN ME AS LORD MAYOR OF LONDON, I NAME YOU CHIEF PROSECUTOR FOR THE CROWN!
I WILL DO MY UTMOST TO SECURE THE HIGHEST IDEALS OF JUSTICE!
DRUMMOND'S IDEA OF JUSTICE WAS SWIFT, COLD VENGEANCE FOR THE SLIGHTEST INFRACTION!
YOU KNOW YOU ARE GUILTY! WHY DON'T YOU CONFESS? CONFESS, YOU SWINE, CONFESS!
AAAIII, HE'S DRIVING ME MAD! YES, YES, I CONFESS-- STOP TORTURING ME!
THIS MAN DESERVES NO MORE MERCY THAN A WILD BEAST! WITH HIS DEATH SHALL JUSTICE BE DONE!
LOOK, YOUR HONOR, HOW THIS DEPRAVED CREATURE BEGS FOR HIS LIFE! I SAY, SHOW HIM NO MERCY!

MONTHS LATER...
GOOD HEAVENS! IT-IT'S BAALZAAR!
YES, MY FRIEND! SO FAR YOU HAVE KEPT OUR AGREEMENT AND THIS MERITS FURTHER REWARD, THE HIGHEST IN THE COURT! BUT LOOK... THE JUDGE IS ABOUT TO SEND ME ANOTHER VICTIM!
THE JUDGE INTONED SENTENCE, BUT DRUMMOND WATCHED ANOTHER VERDICT IN THE MAKING...
I SENTENCE YOU TO BE HANGED BY THE NECK UNTIL YOU ARE DEAD!
I SEE WHAT BAALZAAR MEANS! JUDGE THAYER HIMSELF IS DOOMED!
OOWWW! MY HEART! AAARRGGH!
JUDGE THAYER HAS COLLAPSED! GET A DOCTOR!
HMMM, NOW THE JUDGESHIP STANDS VACANT! CAN THERE BE ANY DOUBT WHO SHALL SUCCEED TO THE POSITION? HA, HA, HA!
AS SIR JOHN DRUMMOND, HE REIGNED SUPREME ON THE BENCH AT OLD BAILEY, WITHOUT AN OUNCE OF COMPASSION
AND IT WILL BE MY PERSONAL PLEASURE TO SEE YOUR NECK STRETCHED AT NEWGATE!
THE CONVICTED MAN WAS ONLY A PETTY THIEF! DRUMMOND'S A BLOOD THIRSTY FIEND!
SOME WEEKS LATER AT NEWGATE PRISON, ON THE EXECUTION SITE...
THAT WAS WELL DONE, MY LAD... YOU?? I THOUGHT...
I PLAY MANY ROLES TO SERVE MY MASTER! HE IS AT THE SOUTH GATE OF THE CEMETERY AT THIS MOMENT!
AN HOUR LATER...
I AM YOUR SERVANT AS EVER, BAALZAAR!
LET US STOP THESE TIRESOME FORMALITIES! WE MUST GO TO MY COURT AT ONCE!
A BLOW ON THE GROUND WITH HIS SCEPTRE UNLOCKED HIS PRIVATE HELL...
YOU ARE FRIGHTENED? HA, HA, HA! YOU SCREAM VERY WELL INDEED!

ONCE AGAIN, DRUMMOND FACED THE HORRORS OF BAALZAAR'S COURT...
YES, I AM DISPLEASED! LOOK AT THIS LAST KNAVISH CREW YOU SENT ME--THEY DO NOT EVEN SCREAM! THERE IS NO PLEASURE FOR ME IF THEY DON'T FEEL GUILT! BAAAH, I'VE A GOOD MIND TO--
SUDDENLY DRUMMOND WAS REMINDED OF HIS HELLISH BARGAIN...
OOOOWWW! THE AWFUL PAIN! TAKE IT AWAY! I PROMISE! I PROMISE!
THIS IS ONLY A SMALL FRACTION OF THE TORTURES YOU WILL FEEL IF YOU FORGET, HA, HA, HA!
OBLIVION FOLLOWED, BUT WHEN DRUMMOND AWOKE...
THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM THE FIEND! I MUST FIND VICTIMS FOR HIM AT ONCE!
BAH, IS THAT ALL YOU HAVE ON THE DOCKET? DRUNKS, THIEVES AND PICKPOCKETS! WHERE ARE THE CUTTHROATS AND HIGH-WAYMEN?
THERE ARE NO CUT-THROATS OR HIGH-WAYMEN OPERATING IN LONDON!
WHEN DRUMMOND LEFT, STAB UPON STAB OF PAIN FOLLOWED...
A FLASH OF INSPIRATION SURGED THROUGH HIS BRAIN!
THIS AREA IS FULL OF DRUNKS AND VAGABONDS! WHAT WOULD BE EASIER THAN TO MURDER AND PLACE THE BLAME ON ONE OF THEM? THAT PASSING CARRIAGE--THIS IS MY CHANCE!
AGAIN AND AGAIN DRUMMOND'S DEADLY CANE FELL ON THE HELPLESS VICTIMS...
HELP
NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU! I MUST KILL YOU, I MUST!

NOW WHERE IS THAT DRUNK I SAW LYING ON THE BENCH ? I MUST FIND SOMEONE TO SEND TO THE GALLOWS FOR THIS CRIME! THOSE WHISTLES...! WHAT DO THEY MEAN ?

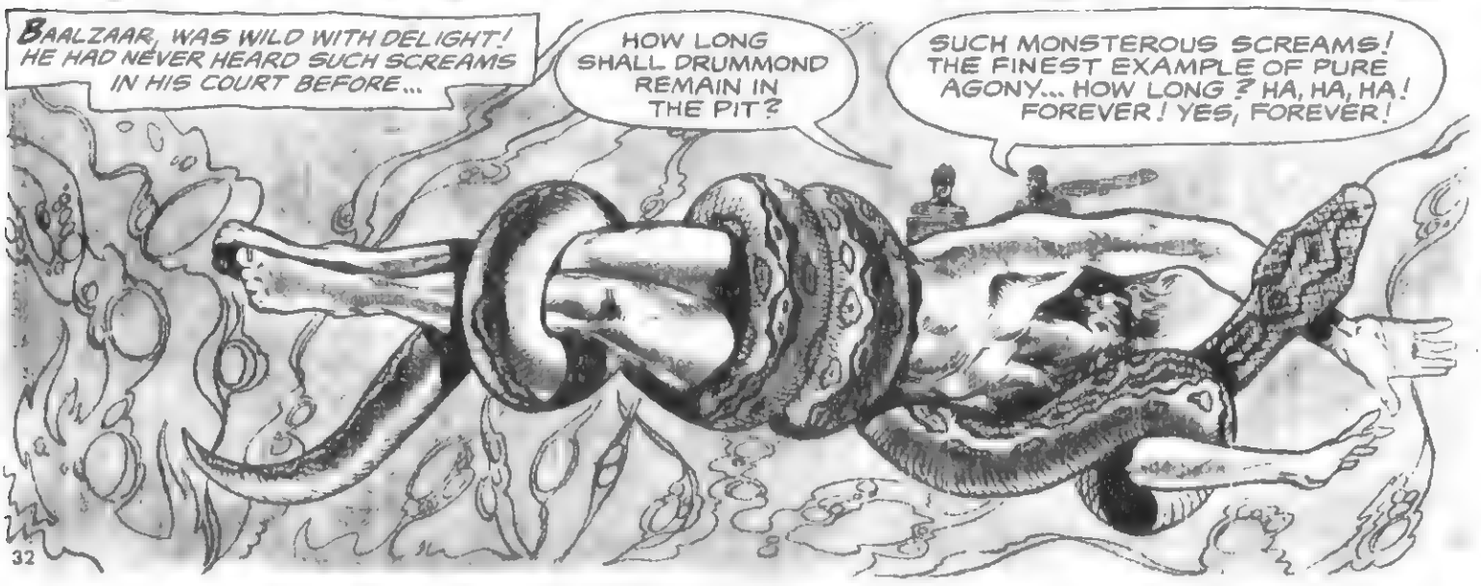
BEFORE DRUMMOND COULD TURN AND DISAPPEAR INTO THE FOG...
LOOK AT HIM, GUILTY AS SIN, WITH BLOOD ALL OVER HIS CLOTHES...!
I-I TELL YOU, I'M INNOCENT! I WAS ATTACKED BY THE SAME MAN, TOO!

LATER AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS..
IT'S A MISTAKE, I TELL YOU! A MISTAKE THAT WILL COST YOU YOUR JOB, INSPECTOR!
NO, SIR JOHN, I'LL RISK THAT!

DESPITE ALL HIS ELOQUENT PLEADING, DRUMMOND WAS CONDEMNED...
MERCY, MERCY, I WAS OUT OF MY MIND! I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING!
SIR JOHN, I SENTENCE YOU TO BE HANGED BY THE NECK UNTIL YOU ARE DEAD!

THE EXECUTION CAME A WEEK LATER! AS THE TRAP WAS SPRUNG...
LOOK, INSPECTOR, THE ROPE WAS SNAPPED! HE'S FALLING INTO THE TRAP!
IT DOESN'T MATTER! HIS NECK WAS PROBABLY BROKEN ANYHOW!

BUT AS THEY TURNED TO RECOVER THE BODY FROM THE TRAP...
THE TRAP...! BY HEAVEN, IT'S EMPTY! AND LISTEN TO THAT SCREAM!
IT'S PAST ALL BELIEF! I CAN'T FATHOM IT...


BAALZAAR, WAS WILD WITH DELIGHT! HE HAD NEVER HEARD SUCH SCREAMS IN HIS COURT BEFORE...
HOW LONG SHALL DRUMMOND REMAIN IN THE PIT?
SUCH MONSTEROUS SCREAMS! THE FINEST EXAMPLE OF PURE AGONY... HOW LONG ? HA, HA, HA! FOREVER! YES, FOREVER!

UP FROM THE FETID STENCH OF ROME'S ANCIENT CATACOMBS SWARMED THE HORRIBLE ARMY — STRANGE AND SINISTER BEYOND BELIEF, SWORN TO DESTROY HUMANITY IN THEIR TERRIBLE BONE CRUNCHING JAWS, SLAVERING AFTER THE SMELL OF HUMAN BLOOD! AND TO THIS FEARFUL SCOURGE WAS ADDED THE GREED AND LUST FOR POWER OF ONE MAN WHO IN TURN WAS TO MEET **THE GREEN HORDE...**

FIENDS from the CRYPT

HE'S GETTING AWAY, SIGNOR COMMISSIONER!
NOT YET! I KNOW THESE SEWERS AS WELL AS HE DOES!

WHY DON'T YOU FIRE, SIGNOR?
NO! I WANT TO TAKE THIS ONE ALIVE IF I CAN! AFTER ALL, HE'S ONLY A PETTY CROOK!

UGH, THESE SEWER RATS GIVE ME THE CREEPS! LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THEM!
DON'T BE AN OLD WOMAN! HURRY UP!

I'M CERTAIN HE DUCKED DOWN THIS WAY! AND THIS PASSAGE LEADS INTO THE OLD CATACOMBS, SO HE CAN'T GET FAR!

SUDDENLY THE TUNNEL IS FILLED WITH THE FRENZIED SCREAMS OF A MAN IN MORTAL TERROR...
FOR THE LOVE OF HEAVEN, SIGNOR! DID YOU HEAR THAT?
HORRIBLE! AND THAT WAS BANCO'S VOICE! DOWN THIS WAY!

THEIR FLASHLIGHTS PICK OUT A LEERING, GRUESOME THING...
GAAA! LOOK, IT'S BANCO! A MOMENT AGO HE WAS A MAN— NOW HE'S ONLY A S-SKELETON!
B-BUT WHAT COULD HAVE DONE THIS, SIGNOR?

THERE IS SOMETHING EVIL IN THIS PLACE, SIGNOR COMMISSIONER! LET US GET OUT OF HERE AT ONCE!
KEEP YOUR NERVE, MAN! THERE MUST BE SOME EXPLANATION FOR ALL THIS! BUT WE'D BETTER REPORT BACK TO THE STATION!

BUT...
THE PASSAGE—IT'S BLOCKED NOW! B-BUT JUST A MOMENT AGO THERE WAS NO DOOR HERE!
WE MUST FIND ANOTHER WAY OUT, SIGNOR! AT ONCE!

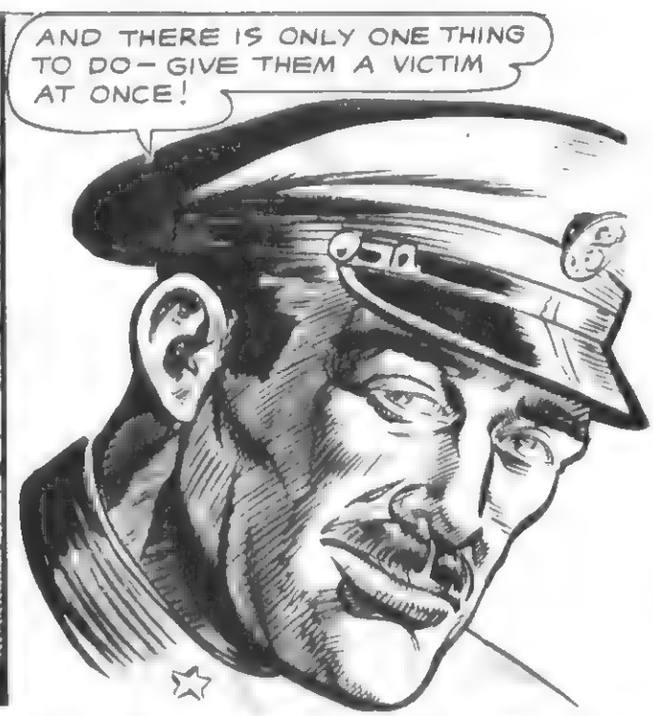
WHILE DESPERATELY SEEKING A WAY OUT, THE MEN WANDER DEEPER INTO THE CATACOMBS...
PHEW, THAT SMELL IS HORRIBLE! THESE CAVERNS HAVE BEEN SEALED FOR CENTURIES!
I BEGIN TO THINK WE ARE TRAPPED, SIGNOR! AND JUST THEN I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING!

YAAAAAAAA! SIGNOR, LOOK! THOSE THINGS...

MONSTERS—AND THEY'RE COMING AFTER US! THEY'LL TEAR US TO PIECES!
RUN FOR YOUR LIFE, MAN! RUN!
AGRRRR—
UBBLEE-

THEY TAKE REFUGE IN A SMALL ROOM...
PERHAPS THIS OLD COFFIN AND THE BONES WILL STOP THEM!
WORK, MAN! STACK MORE BONES IN THE ENTRANCE!

LOOK! ONE OF THOSE THINGS R-REACHING FOR US!
Y-YES! IT WILL GET US UNLESS WE DO SOMETHING!


AND THERE IS ONLY ONE THING TO DO— GIVE THEM A VICTIM AT ONCE!

GRUM— BRRRRR— GROUU—
YOU, PIETRO! THEY WANT A VICTIM AND IT MUST BE ONE OF US! SO LET IT BE YOU! OUT YOU GO!
NO! AAAAAAAA—

SAVE ME! DON'T LET THEM... EEEEEYAAAAAAA—

THERE IS A MOMENT OF DREADFUL RESPITE, THEN THE CREATURES COME CRASHING IN...
ERGG—DROOOO— GUBB!
T-THEY WANT ME NOW! UGH— WHAT MONSTERS THEY ARE— FIENDS OUT OF HADES!

BUT SURPRISINGLY...
DNN—GA— GUMBLE!
T—THEY-RE TRYING TO TALK TO ME! THEY WANT SOMETHING!
WUM— WUM— GA!

THE FIERCE MONSTERS DO INDEED WANT TO MAKE A BARGAIN— AND AFTER A LONG TIME, SIGNOR RENZI UNDERSTANDS WHAT THEY WANT! AT THE SAME TIME HE HATCHES A FIENDISH PLAN OF HIS OWN...
ALL RIGHT, YOU—THINGS! I'LL DO WHAT YOU WANT, BUT REMEMBER THAT YOU MUST OBEY ME IN RETURN!
OOO-LA!
SOON AFTERWARD A REIGN OF TERROR BEGINS IN ROME! SIGNOR RENZI, COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, SEES HIS CHANCE TO MAKE A FORTUNE...
THIS IS THE NIGHT! THOSE BRUTES SHOULD BE STRIKING NOW!
AT THAT MOMENT IN THE VAULT OF THE BANK OF ROME...
W-WHAT! AN EARTHQUAKE? NO, S-SOMETHING COMING UP THROUGH THE FLOOR! I'D BETTER GET HELP AT ONCE!
BUT IT'S TOO LATE...
MOS-GLUR-TUM-BAB! URGGGG!
YIEEEEEEE-
AND THE WEIRD CREATURES, INTELLIGENT ENOUGH TO FOLLOW SIGNOR RENZI'S ORDERS, LOOT THE VAULT OF MILLIONS IN GOLD...
BRAM-WUG!
SNORG!
WUF!
LATER AS THE SIGNOR KEEPS A RENDEZVOUS IN THE GLOOMY CATACOMBS...
YOU HAVE DONE WELL, YOU BRUTES! AND DON'T WORRY, YOU'LL BE PAID!
GARN-LUB
MOUD
THEY'LL MAKE ME THE RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD BEFORE LONG! AND WHO WILL SUSPECT ME?

GRUM-BOOOOO-
COME ALONG NOW AND GET YOUR-(SHUDDER)-REWARD! JUST DOWN HERE THE CATACOMBS RUN UNDER A REHABILITATION CENTER! YOU CAN HAVE THEM!
UGHHR!-
MORBA-

MMFFFF-
RIGHT UP THIS LADDER NOW! IT LEADS INTO THE BARRACKS!
BOOGLE!

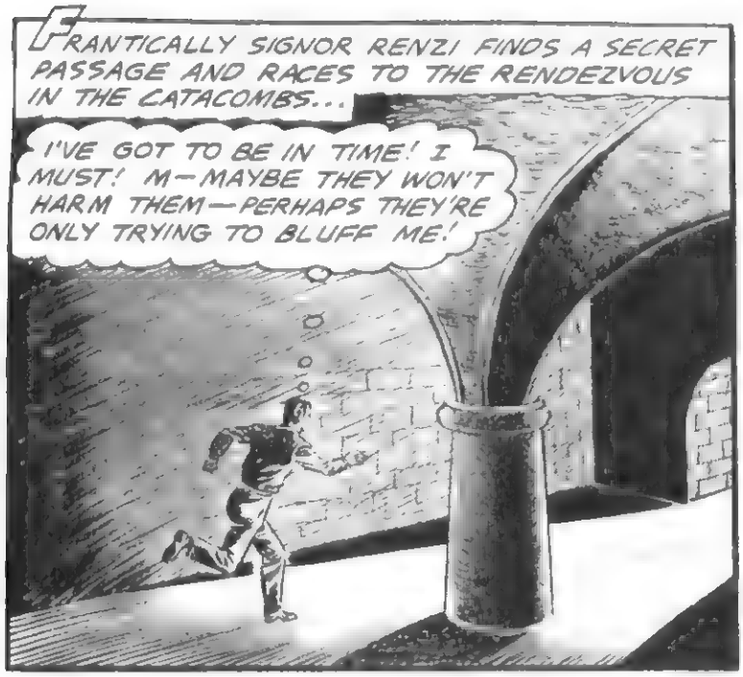
THIS IS A TERRIBLE THING I'M DOING, BUT I MUST! I PROMISED THEM VICTIMS IN RETURN FOR OBEDIENCE-AND IF I DON'T GIVE THEM THESE PEOPLE, THEY'LL TAKE-ME!

FROM ABOVE COMES A SUDDEN, HORRIBLE OUTCRY...
AAA-HELP!
GRUNNNT-
THOSE CREATURES! SAVE US! HELP!
EEEEEEE-

DORN PHLUUU-
N-NO! OHHHHHHH-AAAAAAAAAAA!

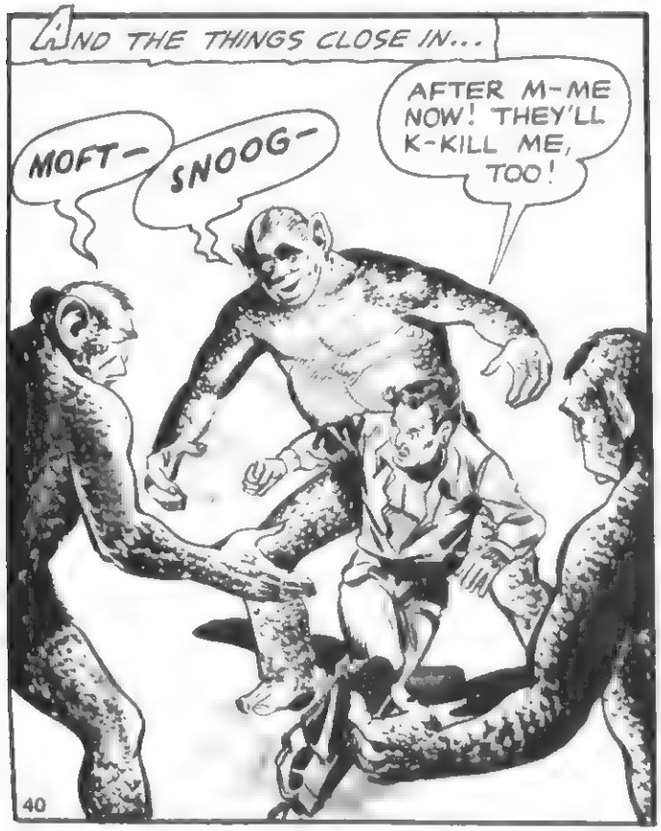
I CAN'T STAND THOSE TERRIBLE SOUNDS ANY LONGER! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE I GO MAD!

TIME PASSES AND SIGNOR RENZI ACCUMULATES ALL THE WEALTH THAT ONE MAN COULD WANT! AND NOW...
WHAT A TENDER SCENE—MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER, HAPPY AND SUSPECTING NOTHING! BUT IF THEY ONLY KNEW HOW THOSE CREATURES HAUNT ME NIGHT AND DAY— ALWAYS WANTING MORE VICTIMS!
I HAVE MORE MONEY THAN A DOZEN MEN COULD EVER SPEND—BUT IT'S NO GOOD UNLESS I CAN GET AWAY FROM THOSE FIENDS OF THE CATACOMBS! SOMEHOW I MUST TAKE MY LOVED ONES AND ESCAPE!
AHH— THERE'S ONE OF THEM NOW, COME TO COMPLAIN BECAUSE THERE ARE NO MORE VICTIMS! WELL, MIGHT AS WELL HAVE THE SHOWDOWN NOW!
LISTEN AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND! YOU MUST GO BACK TO THE CATACOMBS FOREVER! THERE WILL BE NO MORE VICTIMS FOR YOU, EVER! IT'S BECOMING TOO DANGEROUS! NOW GET OUT!
WUGG?
I SAID GET OUT, YOU FOUL BEAST OF HADES! WE'RE ALL THROUGH! OUR BARGAIN IS OVER! OUT! OUT!
BUT SIGNOR RENZI IS SHOCKED FROM HIS HYSTERIA BY THE PATHETIC SCREAMS OF HIS WIFE AND SMALL DAUGHTER...
GOOD HEAVENS— THEY'RE CARRYING THEM AWAY TO THE CATACOMBS, AND I'M POWERLESS TO STOP THEM!
EEEEEEEE-
HELP!


FRANTICALLY SIGNOR RENZI FINDS A SECRET PASSAGE AND RACES TO THE RENDEZVOUS IN THE CATACOMBS...
I'VE GOT TO BE IN TIME! I MUST! M—MAYBE THEY WON'T HARM THEM—PERHAPS THEY'RE ONLY TRYING TO BLUFF ME!

M-MY WIFE—MY DAUGHTER? ARE THEY SAFE? YOU MUST TELL ME— I'LL DO ANYTHING, DO YOU HEAR? ANYTHING!
GUR!—
BOFFE—

THEN THE SIGNOR HEARS A HORRIBLE LAUGHTER BEHIND HIM AND TURNS TO SEE A SIGHT THAT SENDS HIS BRAIN REELING IN TORMENT...
SMUR-DA!
AHHHHHHHHHHHHHH—


AND THE THINGS CLOSE IN...
MOFT—
SNOOG—
AFTER M-ME NOW! THEY'LL K-KILL ME, TOO!

GNNNNNNNNN—

ERS-DA-ESTT-GN-BOR-TA.!
*
The End
* MEANING: HE WAS A FOOL AND A KNAVE, AND WAS DOOMED FROM THE START!

the SLIMY GARGOYLE

MY! THIS PLACE HAS ALL THE CHARM OF A DUNGEON!
WELL, YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT IT'S DIFFERENT! UH... TEA AND CAKE FOR TWO, WAITER...

NOW... IT STARTS! THE WHEELS MESH... AND IT BEGINS...

PERHAPS THE LADY WOULD LIKE TO SEE INTO THE FUTURE? THE TEA LEAVES SPELL THE FUTURE!
SAY, GOOD IDEA-- SEE IF YOU CAN SEE ANY MORE DATES FOR ME IN THE BOTTOM OF THE CUP!
OH...!

I SEE... DOOM! BEWARE... BEWARE OF THE DARK MAN AND THE TEETH OF THE DRAGON!

REMEMBER... YOU HAVE NO WINGS... YOU CAN'T FLY! BEWARE THE DARK MAN AND THE TEETH OF THE DRAGON!
JOHN, PLEASE... I'VE HAD ENOUGH! I-I DON'T LIKE THIS...
UHH...THANKS VERY MUCH! YOU SURE DO PUT ON A GOOD SHOW HERE!

I'M PROBABLY BEING A FOOL. BUT... MY GOOSE PIMPLES FEEL LIKE ICE CUBES! LET'S GO, JOHN...
OKAY! BUT... RELAX! IT'S ALL A BIG GAG!

NOW, FATE IS THROWN INTO SECOND GEAR... AND CLOSES IN ON ELLEN TEMPLE...
WHAT DOES IT MEAN? WHY'D SHE TELL ME TO REMEMBER I HAVE NO WINGS?
...AND "TEETH OF THE DRAGON!" WHAT SILLY NONSENSE, ELLEN! C'MON, I'LL TAKE YOU HOME... FORGET IT, HONEY!

JOHN, I HATE TO FRET, BUT I'M WORRIED! ANYWAY, THANKS FOR THE AFTERNOON!
IF IT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL ANY BETTER, LET IT BE SAID THAT I'M THAT DARK MAN IN YOUR LIFE... AND FROM NOW ON I'LL KEEP A MUZZLE ON MY PET DRAGON! SO LONG!

JOHN FINALLY GOT HER TO LAUGH, BUT THEN...
OH, MISS TEMPLE--THERE WAS A MAN HERE LOOKING FOR YOU THIS AFTERNOON! SMALL, DARK FELLOW... DRESSED ALL IN BLACK... SPOKE FUNNY, TOO... SAID IT WAS URGENT THAT HE SEE YOU!

HER BRAIN BEGAN TO REEL...
BEWARE... THE DARK MAN... THE DARK MAN...

HER NERVES BECAME RAMRODS-- STIFF AND OBSTINATE!
OH! I'M JUMPY AS A CAT ON A HOT STOVE! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT... GO TO A MOVIE, THAT'S IT... A GAY, LIVELY COMEDY!
CRASH!

SHE TRIED TO GAIN RELEASE...
THAT WAS FUN! I'VE BEEN SUCH AN IDIOT, LETTING CATS, SHADOWS AND A POOR OLD LADY IN A TEA SHOP FRIGHTEN ME...

BUT, THE TENSION SNAPPED BACK...AND FATE CLICKED INTO HIGH GEAR!
OH, NO!! IT'S THE MAN, THE DARK MAN... THE ONE WHO'S LOOKING FOR ME!

WAIT! ELLEN, TEMPLE...WAIT! YOU MUST WAIT!
HE... (PUFF--PUFF)... KNOWS MY NAME? I MUST GET AWAY FROM HIM!

ANYTHING FOR ESCAPE... ANY ROAD...

I... I MUST...STOP...REST... IF ONLY HE DIDN'T SEE ME! I'LL DUCK IN HERE! OH, WHY... WHY ME? OH... DON'T LET HIM SEE ME!

WAIT!!

ONE MORE ROUTE...ONE MORE...

THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING TO DO...
I'VE GOT TO JUMP! MAYBE I CAN LAND ON THAT LEDGE BELOW! THERE HE IS! I MUST... I MUST...

BUT IT WAS A ROAD...

THAT LED TO A...

...DEAD END!
HORRIBLE! SHE HIT THE MOUTH OF THAT DRAGON STATUE IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING!
WONDER WHAT DRIVES PEOPLE TO DO THINGS LIKE THAT?

DID I HEAR YOU SAY YOU KNEW HER, BUDDY?
YES... I WAS LOOKING FOR HER FOR A LONG TIME! HER UNCLE, AN OLD COUNT IN FRANCE, LEFT HER A SMALL FORTUNE! I CAME TO BRING HER THE NEWS!

A MILLION BUCKS! GEE... WHY WOULD A GIRL LIKE THAT WANT TO COMMIT SUICIDE?
WHO KNOWS, MY FRIEND? LIFE... SOMETIMES IS VERY STRANGE!
THE END

THERE IN THE GLOOMY RECESSES OF THE STRANGE CAVE AN EERIE LIGHT GLOWED, A LIGHT THAT WAS CENTURIES OLD AND AROUND IT HUDDLED DRIED BONES...SKELETONS CALLED BACK TO LIFE BY THE FANTASTIC NOTES OF THE STRANGE FLUTE! NOTHING HE COULD DO COULD KEEP PROFESSOR GRIMES FROM PLAYING THAT FLUTE, FOR WHO DARES TO RESIST...

THE OLD CRONES' VOODOO

A MIST SHROUDS MOORLANDS BEACH, AS THE THREE PROFESSORS, GRIMES, BURKE AND DUNCAN BEGIN THEIR SUMMER VACATION...

AS THE SUN BREAKS THROUGH THE FOG, GRIMES STROLLS THE DESERTED BEACH WITH THE HOTEL-KEEPER'S SMALL DOG WHEN SUDDENLY...
OOH!

FUNNY... IT WASN'T A STICK I TRIPPED OVER... IT'S A FLUTE! AND JUDGING FROM IT'S APPEARANCE, IT'S ALMOST THREE HUNDRED YEARS OLD! CAN'T MAKE OUT THE INSCRIPTION... WONDER IF IT STILL PLAYS?

SHAKING THE SAND FROM IT, PROFESSOR GRIMES BLOWS ON THE FLUTE IN VAIN! HIS PRACTICED EAR CAN DETECT NO MUSICAL NOTES, BUT AS HE BLOWS, THE DOG CRINGES AND SCAMPERS OFF, HOWLING IN TERROR...
WELL, DOGS CAN HEAR WHAT WE HUMANS CAN'T! I IMAGINE HE'S HEARD SOME TERRIFYING NOTES FROM THIS STRANGE FLUTE!
AROOOO!

SITTING BY THE HILLSIDE, GRIMES PLAYS THE FLUTE AGAIN, SEEKING IN VAIN TO HEAR A SINGLE NOTE... AND SUDDENLY...
THE ROCK SLAB... IT'S CRACKING OPEN... I'VE HEARD OF MUSICAL NOTES THAT COULD SHATTER GLASS, WELL THE UNHEARD NOTES FROM THIS FLUTE SEEMS TO BREAK ROCK!

AGAIN THE PROFESSOR RAISES THE FLUTE TO HIS LIPS! THE CRACK WIDENS, REVEALING A DARK, EERIE CAVE BEYOND!
I-IT DOESN'T SEEM POSSIBLE, BUT THE ROCK IS PARTING! MIGHT AS WELL GO IN AND SEE WHAT'S INSIDE!

AS HE STEPS INTO THE CAVE, SUDDENLY THE UNHEARD FLUTE NOTES BECOME AUDIBLE AS A FANTASTIC WAIL, AS THE COLD COALS OF AN ANCIENT FIRE GLOW AND BONE-FILLED RAGS ABOUT IT STIR TO THE MUSIC'S RYTHYM
S-SKELETONS... AND THEY'RE MOVING!

BOOTED WITH FASCINATION, GRIMES PLAYS ON, AS THE SKELETON FIGURES BECOME CREATURES OF FLESH AND HAG-LIKE FACES...
WITCHES!

PLAY, MASTER FLUTESMAN! PLAY!
THE SABBOT DANCE THEY INTERRUPTED SHALL GO ON!

AS FEAR GRIPS HIS HEART PROFESSOR GRIMES WANTS TO FLEE, BUT SOME MAD COMPULSION MAKES HIM STAY AND PLAY THE FLUTE!
FASTER, FASTER, SISTERS OF DISASTER; TURN AND TURN! THE DEVIL'S FIRES BURN!

WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH, HE FINALLY TEARS THE FLUTE FROM HIS TREMBLING LIPS...
PLAY! PLAY!
N-NO! IT'S A DREAM! AN APPARITION! YOU DON'T EXIST!

WE WILL LIVE UNTO ETERNITY AND YE SHALL PLAY FOR US FOREVER; THE WITCHES' SABBAT SHALL NEVER END!
NO! NO! I DON'T BELIEVE IN WITCHES!

BUT, THE BONY-FINGERED HAGS DRAG HIM FROM THE CAVE...
WE WILL SHOW YOU THE WITCHES' POWER!
ON THE LIVING AND ON THE DEAD!
FIRST THE DEAD! TO THE CEMETERY!

THE WILD FLIGHT ENDS AT A GRAVEYARD! BUSY HANDS UNEARTH A COFFIN... A LIFELESS CORPSE LIES EXPOSED TO THE WITCHE'S INCANTATIONS...
POWDER FROM THE DEVIL'S FOOT! WOODBANE AND ARROWROOT! BRING THE DEAD BACK TO LIFE! THUS COMMANDS SATAN'S WIFE!

W... WHO... SUMMONED... ME... FROM... BEYOND?
N-NO! BACK! CLOSE THE COFFIN!

YE HAVE WITNESSED OUR POWER OVER THE DEAD! NOW YE SHALL SEE OUR POWER OVER THE LIVING! THESE ARE NOT YOURS, ARE THEY?
N-NO! I BORROWED THEM FROM THE HOTEL PORTER! BUT WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH THEM?

AS IS DONE HERE... SO TO ITS OWNER SHALL APPEAR!

AIEEEE!
T-THAT SCREAM... IT CAME FROM THE HOTEL!
NOW MAYBE YE BELIEVE WITCHES EXIST... BUT IF YE TELL WHAT YE SAW... DEATH!

DROPPING THE FLUTE, GRIMES RACES ACROSS THE DUNES TO THE HOTEL...
W-WHAT HAPPENED? I HEARD A SCREAM!
THE MOST FANTASTIC THING I EVER SAW! WE WERE SPEAKING TO THE PORTER AND SUDDENLY HE FELT A STABBING PAIN IN HIS EYES... NOW HE'S COMPLETELY BLIND!

CONTINUED ON THE BACK COVER

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SUMMONING ALL HIS POWER, GRIMES HURLS THE FLUTE OUT OF THE CAVE ENTRANCE...
THERE!...ONCE THE MUSIC'S GONE THE DANCE IS OVER AND THE DANCER'S FALL!
YES... BUT THE FLUTE PLAYER STAYS!

THE ROCK BEGINS TO CLOSE...
NO! STOP! DON'T CLOSE! STOP!
TOO LATE! IN A SECOND IT WILL BE SEALED! THEN YE SHALL BE IMPRISONED IN THIS CAVE AS WE WERE CENTURIES AGO WHEN THEY PUT THE ROCK OVER THE ENTRANCE! ONLY THE FLUTE CAN FREE US... AND NOW IT'S GONE!

THE NEXT DAY, THE WORRIED COMPANIONS SEARCH IN VAIN FOR GRIMES, BUT STUMBLE UPON THE FLUTE...
THERE, I'VE CLEANED THE FLUTE AND CAN JUST MAKE OUT THIS ANCIENT LETTERING NOW...! "BLOW THAT I MAY LIVE!" THE OTHER SIDE IS TOO DIRT-CRUSTED TO READ!
TRY PLAYING IT!

PHHOO!... SAND! IT'S ALL FULL OF SAND!
WELL, TOSS IT AWAY AND LET'S GET ON WITH OUR SEARCH FOR GRIMES!

AS THE FLUTE LANDS IN THE OCEAN, THE SWIRLING WATERS WASH THE REVERSE INSCRIPTION UNTIL ITS ANCIENT WORDS CAN BE READ!
When I am silent no one dances

And WHEN THE MUSIC STOPS IN THE AIRLESS CAVE, THE WITCHES WITHER, CRUMPLE AND FALL LIFELESS TO THE GROUND AS SINISTER SKELETONS, AS GRIMES SCRATCHES THE ROCK SLAB WITH FAILING STRENGTH...
DUNCAN, THERE'S NO POINT IN WASTING TIME AROUND THIS ROCK SLAB! GRIMES COULDN'T BE LOST HERE WITHOUT OUR SEEING HIM!
BURKE, MAYBE WE SHOULD'VE SAVED THAT FLUTE... I KEEP WONDERING WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF WE DID PLAY IT!
THE END